

## Blue Laws of Virginia.

HOW SINNERS WERE PUNISHED IN OLDEN TIMES.

Virginia was styled the "Old Dominion" because during the protectorate of Cromwell something like an attempt was made to invite Charles II., it is said, then a refugee, to establish an independent dominion within her territory. Many of the so-called "blue laws" of Virginia are, in their way, as laughable as those of any other of the colonial governments. We may well wonder if posterity will laugh at us in future time, twenty years from now, as we love in the present generation to poke fun at our ancestors, or rather, as we should say, at our neighbor's ancestors.

Well, the "blue laws" of Virginia—these are a few extracts:—  
In 1610, attendance at church twice every Sunday was enjoined "upon pain, for the first fault, to lose their provisions and allowance for the whole week following; for the second, to lose said allowance; and also to be whipped; and for the third, to suffer death." The law was subsequently modified as follows: "That every person should go to church Sundays and holidays, or lie near and heels that night, and be a slave to the colony the following week; for the second offense he should be a slave for a month; for the third a year and a day."

I do wish we had such a funny law in our time. It would make the lazy folks get up early in the morning on Sunday.  
1662—"Every person who refuses to have his child baptized by a lawful minister (of the Church of England) shall be amerced 2,000 lbs. of tobacco."

The whole liturgy of the Church of England shall be thoroughly read at every church every Sunday.  
1663—"If any Quaker or other separatists whatsoever in this colony assemble themselves together to the number of five or more, of the age of 16 years or upward, under the pretense of joining in a religious worship not authorized in England or this country, the parties so offending shall forfeit and pay for the first offense, 500 pounds of tobacco, and for the second offense shall be banished from the colony."

Puritanical intolerance, indeed, Mr. Royallist!  
They did not let the people travel on Sundays in Connecticut. They tell amusing stories about the selectmen stopping people on the highways there in ancient times. Well, they did nothing of the sort in Virginia! Of course not. Let us see:

1662—"Enacted, that the Lord's day be kept holy, and no journeys be made on that day, unless upon necessity. And all persons inhabiting in the country, having no lawful excuse, shall every Sunday resort to the parish church or chapel."

"Good; this was jolly. Again.  
"The court in every country shall cause to be set up near the courthouse, a pillory, a pair of stocks, a whipping-post, and a ducking stool, in such places as they shall think convenient, which not being set up in six months after the date of this act, the said court shall be fined 5,000 pounds of tobacco." Funny, decidedly; but the funniest part of this tale is the ducking or cucking stool. This was a sort of a long beam or pole, moving on a pivot at the middle, and having a seat fastened at the further end, wherein a scolding woman being placed, was conveniently let down and ducked in a pond or stream of water.

This was a favorite pastime of these royalists in early days. I have never discovered that the Puritans ever practiced it in New England. Not they. They were too straight-laced for any such amusements. And the method of punishing scolds was introduced into this City of New York by royalist English—most ungalant fellows!—and not by the Dutch, and the practice prevailed here for a long time. We have a city ordinance decreeing that one be executed as early as 1692. The machine then stood on the wharf in front of the Old Stadt Hays or City Hall in Coen-es slip.

But one more and I have done.  
1679—"The first offense of hog-stealing shall be punished according to the former law (to pay 1,000 pounds of tobacco, and in case of inability, serve two years); upon a second conviction the offender shall stand two hours in the pillory and lose his ears; and for the third offense he shall be tried by the laws of England, as in case of felony."

Poor hog-stealer! This was hard on him—a predicament truly laughable.—  
Evening Post.

Flowers and Children.  
In an article in the May number of the influence of toys in educating and forming the tastes of children, Blanche Jerrold writes charmingly on the subject of flowers. He says:

"I would have flowers crowded in the school room windows of the very young, would build broad open balconies for the baby scholars, where, during every slight moment of fair weather, they might have fresh air, and bits of beauty hovering under their inquiring eyes. I would have the Poupoune of Brussels; making elementary education be—not when a child has been already reared into a little monster by bad parents and evil surroundings, but in its infancy, and the first pointing of its fingers to pictures and plants. We should or our children would—see the good results of such cradle teaching, of aesthetic thrown into the alphabet, into the top-top, the playground, and the adornment of the school room. For the child at alive to the simplest lessons and duties of the field, that can delight in living to imitate—if only with straw paper—a beautiful form placed before is far on the way to a higher education, even should subsequent events over-throw in its path, than the nature of dull, uninformed sight in infancy, who may be kept well at school der good masters. A feeling for the beautiful, a delight in it, which is at present unknown in England, is that which shall strive after, not in art academies, but in infant schools and nurseries. The roughest Dutch doll is the Venus of the child that nurses it. We are the ugly thing to the child, and so are for ourselves the after-suffering of being thus daily in the way. The remark applies to nearly all toys; certainly to all that are English."

## On the Track of St. Paul's Voyage.

No section of the voyage from Trieste to Alexandria rivaled in interest, to me at least, that part where we were within sight of the old world of old Crete, or the island of Candia. Paul in his epistle to Titus, does not give the Cretans a very good character, but never mind the people, the island is all we are talking about now. I took my bible on deck, and turning to the last chapter of the Acts of the apostles, read the whole history of the memorable voyage and shipwreck of the great apostle to the gentiles. From the printed page I looked up at the chalky and shrubless mountains that form the backbone of the island, knowing that my eyes were privileged to survey the very same shore and cliffs that he had seen, and then down to the book again, thankful and joyful that while time may work its changes in countries and their people, the Gospel is ever new, and the true Christian, though in bonds, is always triumphant on sea and land. The little island of Candia was right near our bows, and off in a quiet recess formed by a promontory of the island was the Fair Heavens of Paul's day. It all seemed to me no longer history, but the actual present, so minutely confirmed in the account in the Acts by the present topography of Candia. I found Professor Whitney's Atlas, to be an excellent aid, and having it constantly in hand, and comparing it with localities marked on larger and more pretentious atlases, can testify to its remarkable accuracy and reliability. I have been using it here in Egypt in order to identify the scriptural names with the present places, and find it equally valuable. You can well imagine how glad I am at the prospect of having it with me in Palestine—If, indeed, it lasts till then, for what with my rough handling it on all occasions, and the use made of it by fellow travelers, it already begins to partake of the dilapidated character of the country in which I am traveling.

I was told on my going to bed on Friday night, that we should sight the Alexandria light before midnight. This made me a little restless, as I lay in my berth and looked out of my friendly window which was just at my head, and saw the moonlight playing and breaking on the almost noiseless waters, I could not help looking far off for the night. At last before I became even sleepy, I saw the revolving light which marks the city of Alexandria, the mouth of the sacred Nile, and the supposed spot in which the ancient Aharos of Egypt, one of the seven wonders of the world, stood. The next morning we entered the harbor.

Story of a Yankee Blacksmith.  
A Connecticut paper has this story:—Some time ago a gawky-looking individual entered a blacksmith shop in a country town in this state and applied for a job, in a voice in perfect keeping with the stupidity of his physiognomy. His awkward, ungainly, and uncouth personal appearance impressed the smiths with the idea that they saw before them an object of prospective merriment, so they quizzingly asked him if he could do all sorts of forging. Upon his answering affirmatively, the "boss" winked to the workmen, handed him a bar of cast-iron, and told him to try his hand in forging some horse shoes. The greenhorn in his persevering efforts to make the treacherous metal stick, afforded much amusement to the other smiths.

When dinner time came, the greenhorn had not made much headway towards constructing a shoe, but he kept at work until the last man had gone to dinner, then suddenly dropping the bar of cast iron, he made directly for one of the other forges, and selecting the best pair of tongs he could find, in an incredibly short space of time he had converted the jaws of the tongs into a perfect horse-shoe. Then he slipped along to the next forge, and repeated, the trick, and thus he left his compliment to the three forges. When the blacksmith and his "jows" returned from dinner, they found the verdant looking fellow astride the anvil, with a mournful, disconsolate, woe-begone countenance comical to behold. He was greeted by a boisterous shout of laughter, coupled with the inquiry: "How do you get along making horse shoes? Ain't sorry you learnt the trade, are you?"

The object of their jest replied: "I've got along pretty well; I've knocked out three shoes, all 'cept cutting off the spurs."

Then he held the tongs, or rather, what were once tongs, before their astonished gaze. As the idea that they had been victimized gradually dawned on the mind of these disciples of Vulcan, their lengthened and ludicrous visages were interesting to behold. It turned out that the verdant looking chap was a "boss blacksmith" in a New Haven shop, and was considered one of the best workmen in the country.

Truth in Opera.  
One night, when Charlotte Patti was in Brooklyn, she sang with Ferranti. Just as the buffo singer was leading her out the door to the platform, some one in the room behind him cried out that he had burst his coat at the seam of the back. It was too late to recede, for the audience had seen him, and the two singers advanced to the footlights. But the knowledge of the mishap took all the humor out of Ferranti, and the duet, which was sung in Italian, was so dolefully devoid of the usual humor that Patti noticed it before they were half through, and dropping the text of the song, she fitted the following words to it in Italian:

"What is the matter with you to-night? I don't understand your nervousness. Nobody laughs at you."

Whereupon Ferranti, in mellifluous baritone and equally mellifluous Italian, responded:

"By the virgin, I have burst my coat. Everybody will laugh when I am going off."

At this unexpected interchange of public feelings, Max Maretzek and his orchestra began to laugh immediately. Then the people in the front seats, seeing the orchestra and the artists laughing, joined themselves, and the merriment presently broke out in applause all over the house.

"Ah," said one of the Brooklyn papers, "there is always something majestic in Ferranti's singing of that song. People burst into sympathetic laughter without being able to tell why!"

## C. W. Tressin's Column.

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